

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda and Reports

For consideration on

**Tuesday, 1st September  
2009**

In Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Chorley

At 6.30 pm



## **PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC QUESTIONS/SPEAKING AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETINGS**

- Questions must be submitted to the Democratic Services Section by no later than midday, two working days before the day of the meeting to allow time to prepare appropriate responses and investigate issues if necessary.
- A maximum period of 3 minutes will be allowed for a question from a member of the public on an item on the agenda. A maximum period of 30 minutes to be allocated for public questions if necessary at each meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This will provide an opportunity for members of the public to raise and ask questions on any issue falling within the remit of the Committee.

20 August 2009

Dear Councillor

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 1ST SEPTEMBER 2009**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Chorley on Tuesday, 1st September 2009 commencing at 6.30 pm.

### **AGENDA**

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)**

To confirm as a correct record the enclosed minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 10 August 2009.

3. **Declarations of Any Interests**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda. If the interest arises **only** as result of your membership of another public body or one to which you have been appointed by the Council then you only need to declare it if you intend to speak.

If the personal interest is a prejudicial interest, you must withdraw from the meeting. Normally you should leave the room before the business starts to be discussed. You do, however, have the same right to speak as a member of the public and may remain in the room to enable you to exercise that right and then leave immediately. In either case you must not seek to improperly influence a decision on the matter.

4. **Public Questions**

Members of the public who have requested the opportunity to ask a question(s) on an item on the agenda will be asked to put their question(s) to the Committee. Each member of the public will be allowed to ask one supplementary question within his/her allocated 3 minutes.

5. **Executive Cabinet - 3 September 2009**

To consider any reports on the agenda for the Executive Cabinet meeting to be held on 3 September 2009.

Members of the Committee are requested to notify the Democratic Services by Friday, 28 August 2009, to ensure the attendance of the appropriate Executive Member.

Please bring your copy of the Executive Cabinet agenda previously circulated.

6. **Future agenda items (Pages 7 - 12)**

To consider the Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan and the Council's Forward Plan for the four month period 1 September to 31 December 2009 (documents enclosed).

7. **Information and Communication Technology availability for Members (Pages 13 - 16)**

To receive and consider the enclosed report of the Corporate Director (Information and Communication Technology and Chief Information Officer).

8. **Work undertaken by Groundwork**

To receive a short presentation delivered by representatives of Groundwork, introduced by Corporate Director (People).

9. **Reports from the Task and Finish Groups**

**Joint Scrutiny Inquiry with Preston and South Ribble on Affordable Housing**

To receive a verbal update on the inquiry from the Chair, Councillor Dennis Edgerley.

**Highways Issues Task and Finish Group**

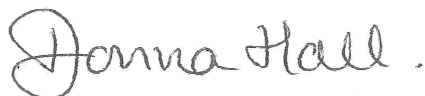
To receive a verbal update on the inquiry from the Chair, Councillor Mike Devaney.

**Town Centre vitality Task and Finish Group**

To receive a verbal update on the inquiry from the Chair, Councillor Peter Wilson.

10. **Any other item(s) the Chair decides is/are urgent**

Yours sincerely



Donna Hall  
Chief Executive

Ruth Rimmington  
Democratic and Member Services Officer  
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## **Distribution**

1. Agenda and reports to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Councillor Dennis Edgerley (Chair), Councillor Alan Cullens (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Nora Ball, Mike Devaney, Marie Gray, Harold Heaton, Adrian Lowe, Rosie Russell, Edward Smith, Iris Smith, Joyce Snape and Peter Wilson for attendance.
2. Agenda and reports to Donna Hall (Chief Executive), Gary Hall (Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation)), Lesley-Ann Fenton (Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance)), Jamie Carson (Corporate Director (People)), Tim Murphy (Corporate Director of Information and Communication Technology and Chief Information Officer), Carol Russell (Head of Democratic Services) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer) for attendance.

**This information can be made available to you in larger print or on audio tape, or translated into your own language. Please telephone 01257 515118 to access this service.**

આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની પોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળતાથી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો: 01257 515822

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپ کی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون

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## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Monday, 10 August 2009**

**Present:** Councillor Alan Cullens (Chair) and Councillors Nora Ball, Harold Heaton, Adrian Lowe, Rosie Russell, Edward Smith, Iris Smith, Joyce Snape and Peter Wilson

**Officers in attendance:** Lesley-Ann Fenton (Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance)), Ishbel Murray (Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods)), Lorraine Charlesworth (Corporate Director of Human Resources), Tim Murphy (Corporate Director of Information and Communication Technology and Chief Information Officer), Dave Hewson (Active People Manager), Carol Russell (Head of Democratic Services) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

### 09.OS.53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dennis Edgerley, Mike Devaney and Marie Gray.

### 09.OS.54 MINUTES

**RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 June 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

### 09.OS.55 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct the following interests were declared:

- Councillor Adrian Lowe declared a personal interest in item 6: Executive's response to Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry into Chorley Community Housing and item 11 Chorley Partnership's Performance Report - First Quarter 2009 / 2010.
- Councillor Alan Cullens declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 5: Executive Cabinet - 13 August 2009 (Annual Treasury Management report 2008 / 2009 and interim review 2009 / 2010) and a personal interest item 6: Executive's response to Overview and Scrutiny Inquiry into Chorley Community Housing.

### 09.OS.56 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No members of the public requested to ask a question at the meeting.

### 09.OS.57 EXECUTIVE CABINET - 13 AUGUST 2009

*Councillor Alan Cullens declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item and left the room. Councillor Harold Heaton took the Chair for this item.*

The Committee considered the Annual Treasury Management report 2008 / 2009 and interim review 2009 / 2010 from the Executive Cabinet agenda.

In response to a query officers confirmed that the current position based on the latest guidance from the Local Government Association was that a recovery of 83p in the pound was now predicated on money invested in Landsbanki.

**RESOLVED – That the report be noted.**

**09.OS.58 EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INQUIRY INTO CHORLEY COMMUNITY HOUSING**

*Councillors Alan Cullens and Adrian Lowe declared a personal interest in this item.*

The Committee received a copy of the report considered by the Executive Cabinet at their meeting in June. The report endorsed all the recommendations made by the Chorley Community Housing inquiry and outlined how the actions would be delivered.

**RESOLVED – The response of the Executive Cabinet to the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group inquiry report on Chorley Community Housing be noted with thanks.**

**09.OS.59 UPDATED ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The Corporate Director (Human Resources and Organisational Development) presented the updated attendance policy. One of the outcomes of the Committee's 2008 inquiry into the authority's attendance management was to update this policy.

Members noted that a Pandemic Flu Plan and a Human Resources Response Toolkit had been developed to address what the Council should do if staff fall ill, had to care for affected relatives or if schools and nurseries are forced to close during a flu pandemic. The Council would use the flexible working arrangements to support staff as much as possible.

**RESOLVED – That the updated Attendance Policy be noted.**

**09.OS.60 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The Committee considered the Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan and the Council's Forward Plan for the four month period 1 August 2009 to 30 November 2009.

Members noted that under the new Overview and Scrutiny responsibilities crime and disorder was scheduled to be scrutinised at the meeting on November 30.

The item on the Forward Plan relating to the Approval of Central Lancashire Local Development Framework Core Strategy Delivery Supplement would be presented to this Committee when it was considered by the Executive Cabinet.

**RESOLVED – That the work programme and Forward Plan be noted.**

**09.OS.61 BUSINESS PLAN AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING STATEMENTS - FIRST QUARTER 2009 / 2010**

The Committee received the Business Plan and Performance Monitoring Statements.

**(a) Business Directorate**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators.

Members queried whether rental bonds had been issued to individuals or families and whether there was a proactive approach to issuing bonds to families.



Clarification was requested on the terms of reference for the Section 106 task group and a query was raised relating to if planning permission was required for allotments, including any buildings on allotments.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1. The report be noted.**
- 2. A response to the queries on rental bonds and allotments be forwarded by email.**
- 3. An update report outlining the terms of reference for the Section 106 task group be presented to a future meeting.**

**(b) Business Transformation Directorate**

The Corporate Director (ICT and Chief Information Officer) and Corporate Director (Human Resources and Organisational Development) reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators.

Members queried aspects of the Customer Relationship Management System and noted that the customer would receive notification of the resolution of their call, for example, if their bin hadn't been collected they would receive a phone call or text message to inform them the bin had been collected.

A report was requested on the Citrix implementation outlining issues, such as downtime.

A breakdown of undisputed invoices processed within 15 and 30 days to show whether the Council was speeding up payments given the impact the recession is having on businesses was requested. A breakdown of the expenditure (£56k within the buildings fund) relating to the Lancastrian was also requested.

**RESOLVED –**

- 4. The report be noted.**
- 5. A response to the queries on undisputed invoice payment and expenditure within the buildings fund be forwarded by email.**
- 6. A report be presented to the next meeting regarding Citrix implementation.**

**(c) Neighbourhoods Directorate**

The Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods) reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators.

Members noted that £5,000 expenditure for bus shelters should be accounted for within the Business Directorate budget, this was payment for the bus shelter located outside of Booths and was to be funded via slippage from 2008/09. £3,000 expenditure attributed to burglar alarms was for improvements to the existing system at Bengal Street Depot, including additional coverage for the new workshop area and additional alarm points.

For off-street parking the figure should read £52,000 rather than £85,000. The ongoing condition of the economy, the increase in concessionary travel use and recent increase in fees continued to impact on income. The Directorate would be reviewing the fees/tariffs for all uses of the car parks. Recoverable costs related to the income recovered from South Ribble for the temporary shared Community Safety Manager post.

Officers undertook to respond to a query relating to assistance that could be given to Heskin Parish Council relating to the relocation and provision of play equipment.

**RESOLVED –**

7. **The report be noted.**
8. **A response to the query on Heskin Parish Council be forwarded directly to Councillor Edward Smith.**

*Councillor Nora Ball left the meeting at 7.20pm.*

**(d) People Directorate**

The Active People Manager reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators.

Members had requested more specific information about the development of allotment provision in the borough and discussed details of work undertaken to date and activity planned in the near future. Queries were raised regarding the percentage of people who accept the offer of an allotment and the status of the land by the cemetery in Adlington that had been proposed for allotments.

A query was raised whether the free swimming initiative had increased the usage figures for Brinscall Baths.

**RESOLVED –**

9. **The report be noted.**
10. **A response to the queries on allotments and Brinscall Baths be forwarded by email.**

**(e) Policy and Performance Directorate**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) reported progress against the key actions and performance indicators. There were 8 rather than 12 new LSP projects approved by the LSP Executive for 2009/10.

A Member queried who determined the allocation of Grass roots grants.

**RESOLVED –**

1. **The report be noted.**
2. **A response to the query on Grass root grants be forwarded by email.**

**09.OS.62 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - FIRST QUARTER 2009 / 2010**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) presented the report setting out performance against the Corporate Strategy and the Council's National Indicators for the first quarter of 2009/10, 1 April to 30 June 2009.

The Corporate Strategy 2008/9 – 2010/11 identified 36 Key Projects. At the end of the first quarter 92% of the key projects (33) were on track, 8% of projects (3) were rated 'Amber' and no projects were rated 'Red'.

At the end of the first quarter 11 national indicators could be reported. All of these indicators had targets set and have been reported previously. Of the 11 the majority (8) had matched or exceeded target and 3 had missed the target by 5% or more.

In response to a query a Member advised that Age Concern had undertaken some research into volunteers, but would not release it for data protection purposes.

**RESOLVED –**

**3. The report be noted.**

**4. A response to the query on research into volunteers be forwarded by email.**

**09.OS.63 CHORLEY PARTNERSHIP'S PERFORMANCE REPORT - FIRST QUARTER 2009 / 2010**

*Councillor Adrian Lowe declared a personal interest in this item.*

The Assistant Chief Executive (Policy and Performance) presented the report which updated Members on the progress of the Local Strategic Partnership in the first quarter of 2009/10, including the first year's performance of the Local Area Agreement.

The Local Strategic Partnership had now commissioned a new programme of projects for 2009/10, designed to deliver the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy. There were plans to fund projects relating to alcohol misuse and abuse later in the year in line with the recommendations of the recent scrutiny inquiry into the Local Strategic Partnership.

An overview of the Sustainable Community Strategy indicators that could be monitored on a quarterly basis were included within the report. Members were particularly interested in the overview of a basket of credit crunch indicators. These showed that the Job Seekers Allowance claimant count figures showed a fall over the last three months in claims within Chorley. There had been approximately 47 jobs created or preserved through the creation of new employment/retail premises in the first quarter.

The Committee considered the performance of the Local Strategic Partnership against the first year of the Local Area Agreement 2008/9, in relation to district level targets.

**RESOLVED – The report be noted.**

**09.OS.64 REPORTS FROM THE TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

**Joint Scrutiny Inquiry with Preston and South Ribble on Affordable Housing**

On behalf of Councillor Edgerley the Democratic and Member Services Officer updated the Committee. A meeting of the three Chairs had been scheduled for that morning to sign off the final report - this had been postponed due to sickness and would be rescheduled in the next few weeks.

**Highways Issues Task and Finish Group**

On behalf of Councillor Mike Devaney, Councillor Alan Cullens advised the Group had met twice to scope this inquiry and determine the key issues, which related to the draft Streetscene Services Agreement and reporting and monitoring repairs. It was requested that Councillor Ken Ball be added to the membership of the Group.

**Town Centre vitality Task and Finish Group**

Councillor Peter Wilson reported the Group had met once to begin the scoping of the inquiry. Many queries had been raised and Members had commented on how large the topic area was. The priorities for the inquiry would be set at the next meeting. It was requested that Councillor Anthony Gee be added to the membership of the Group.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1. The updates be noted.**
- 2. Councillor Ken Ball be added to the membership of the Highways Issues Task and Finish Group.**
- 3. Councillor Anthony Gee be added to the membership of the Town Centre vitality Task and Finish Group.**

Chair

	21 May	22 Jun	10 Aug	1 Sept	28 Sept	9 Nov	30 Nov	18 Jan	15 Feb	22 Mar
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Holding the Executive to account

Executive Leader										
Policy and Performance	MS PR CP		MS PR CP			MS PR CP		BS	MS PR CP	
Neighbourhoods	MS		MS			MS			MS	
Resources	MS		MS			MS			MS	
Business	MS		MS			MS			MS	
People	MS		MS			MS			MS	
Sustainable Communities Act		*								*
Affordable Housing Task Group - Service Improvement Plan		*								
Updated Attendance Policy Statement			*							
Work undertaken by Groundwork				*						
ICT services for Members				*						
Closed church yards policy					*					
Value for Money review of Support Services							*			
Local Development Framework							*			
Forward Plan	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Executive Cabinet agenda	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Policy Development and Review of Council Services (Task and Finish Groups)

Highways		S	S	S	C	C	R	R		
Town Centre Regeneration			S	S	C	C	C	R	R	
Neighbourhood Working					M					
Efficiency Gains							M			
Streetscene Issues		F					M			

<u>Crime and Disorder</u>							*			
<u>Health</u>										

External Scrutiny

Chorley Community Housing					F					M
Affordable Housing (South Ribble and Preston)					R			F		
Chorley Partnership		R			F					

Other

Work Programme	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Review of the Year										*
Annual Report	*									

Key:

Holding the Executive to account

- MS Business plan monitoring statements
- PR Performance report and
- CP Chorley Partnership performance report
- BS Budget scrutiny

Policy Development and Review of Council Services and External Scrutiny

- S Scoping
- C Collecting and considering evidence
- R Report
- F Feedback and action
- M Monitoring

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# CHORLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 SEPTEMBER 2009 TO 31 DECEMBER 2009

This Forward Plan sets out the details of the key decisions which the Executive Cabinet, individual Executive Members or Officers expect to take during the next four month period. The Plan is rolled forward every month and is available to the public 14 days before the beginning of each month.

A Key Decision is defined as:

1. Any executive decision (as opposed to a regulatory decision) which is likely to result in the Council incurring significant expenditure or the making of savings where there is:
  - A change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more, or
  - A contract worth £100,000 or more, or
  - A new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more.
2. Any executive decision which will have a significant impact in environmental, physical, social or economic terms on communities living or working in two or more electoral wards - This includes any plans or strategies which are not within the meaning of the Council's Policy Framework set out in Article 4 of the Council's Constitution.
3. As a matter of local choice, the Forward Plan also includes the details of any significant issues to be initially considered by the Executive Cabinet and submitted to the Full Council for approval.
4. New items on the Forward Plan are highlighted in bold print.

The current members of the Executive Cabinet are:

Councillor Peter Goldsworthy	Executive Leader
Councillor Patricia Case	Deputy Leader
Councillor Greg Morgan	Executive Member (Policy and Performance)
Councillor Eric Bell	Executive Member (Neighbourhoods)
Councillor Kevin Joyce	Executive Member (Resources)
Councillor Peter Malpas	Executive Member (Business)
Councillor John Walker	Executive Member (People)

Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the matters listed below may do so by contacting the relevant officer listed against each key decision, within the time period indicated.

Under the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution, a Key Decision may not be taken, unless:

- It is published in the Forward Plan;
- 5 clear days have lapsed since the publication of the Forward Plan; and
- If the decision is to be taken at a meeting of the Executive Cabinet, 5 clear days notice of the meeting has been given.

The law and the Council's Constitution provide for urgent key decisions to be made, even though they have not been included in the Forward Plan in accordance with Rule 18 (General Exception) and Rule 19 (Special Urgency) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

Copies of the following documents may be inspected at the Town Hall, Chorley, PR7 1DP or accessed from the Council's website: [www.chorley.gov.uk](http://www.chorley.gov.uk)

- Council Constitution
- Forward Plan
- Reports on the key decisions to be taken
- The minutes or decision notice for each key decision, which will normally be published within 5 working days after having been made

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Executive Cabinet which are held at the Town Hall, Chorley. The dates and times of the meetings are published on [www.chorley.gov.uk](http://www.chorley.gov.uk) or you may contact the Democratic Services Section on telephone number 01257 515122 for further details.

**D Hall**  
**Chief Executive**

**Publication Date: \*\* \*\* 2009**



<b>Details of the Decision to be taken</b>	<b>Decision to be taken by</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Earliest Date decision can be taken</b>	<b>Proposed Consultees</b>	<b>Method(s) of Consultation</b>	<b>Documents to be considered by Decision taker</b>	<b>Representation s may be made to the following officer by the date stated</b>
Approval for adoption of the revised Lancashire Waste Strategy	Executive Cabinet	Executive Member (Neighbourhoods)	3 Sep 2009	Strategy Group	Revised Lancashire Waste Strategy document to be supplied to the Strategy Group	Revised Lancashire Waste Strategy	Corporate Director (Neighbourhoods) Tel: 01257 515720 ishbel.murray@chorley.gov.uk Monday, 24 August 2009
Approval of Joint Procurement Policy with South Ribble Council	Executive Cabinet	Executive Member (Resources)	3 Sep 2009	Strategy Group	Draft Procurement Strategy provided to consultees	Draft Joint Procurement Strategy	Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation) Tel: 01257 515480 gary.hall@chorley.gov.uk Monday, 24 August 2009

<b>Details of the Decision to be taken</b>	<b>Decision to be taken by</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Earliest Date decision can be taken</b>	<b>Proposed Consultees</b>	<b>Method(s) of Consultation</b>	<b>Documents to be considered by Decision taker</b>	<b>Representations may be made to the following officer by the date stated</b>
Approval of Central Lancashire Local Development Framework Core Strategy Delivery Supplement	Executive Cabinet	Executive Member (Business)	12 Nov 2009	Strategy Group, Central Lancashire Authorities' LDF Working Groups and Central Lancashire LDF Joint Advisory Committee	Final Delivery Supplement Document to be provided to consultees	Central Lancashire LDF Core Strategy Final Delivery Supplement	Corporate Director (Business) Tel: 01257 515285 jane.meek@chorley.gov.uk Monday, 26 October 2009



Report of	Meeting	Date
Corporate Director (ICT)	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1 September 2009

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AVAILABILITY FOR MEMBERS

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To report on recent out of hours down-time and the work done to improve availability

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

- Members note the report.

### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region		Develop local solutions to climate change.	
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances		Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	
Involving people in their communities		Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	X

### BACKGROUND

- At the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee it was requested that I report back on how we aim to maximise service availability. The query arose as a result of recent service interruptions during weekends and therefore this report also reviews the causes and resolutions of those particular issues in the context of the wider availability question.

### THE SERVICE – TECHNOLOGY

- Although the service provided by Members can be seen as an end to end service, in reality it consists of three distinct elements;

Local equipment – laptop, printer, telephone  
 Server based systems – email, theloop, moderngov etc.  
 Third party communications – BT/Telewest broadband services and equipment

A failure in any of these three elements will prevent Members from using Council systems.

The fourth element of the solution is the support service provided by ICT Services to resolve any issues encountered.



6. Initially, I will concentrate on the 3 technology elements of the service provided to Members and how we are working to improve the availability of services in each area.

**Local equipment**

Members will be aware that the laptops they are using are nearing the end of their useful lives. A programme is underway to replace them with thin client devices that are, by their very nature, less susceptible to faults. This is due mainly to the fact that they do not contain any moving parts. As well as being less likely to fail, the way in which ‘thin client’ works is that the software and data used by Councillors will no longer reside on the laptop and therefore, should a thin client device fail, we can simply bring a new one out and plug it in. This will reduce the downtime experienced by Councillors.

**Systems accessed by Councillors (based at Union St.)**

Our new Citrix environment has been built to maximise resilience and reduce the downtime of key systems. This is achieved by using features such as;

- Server imaging
- Virtual servers
- Multiple physical servers
- Thin client technology itself

I will explain these in more detail at the meeting if required.

Although we are currently experiencing implementation problems, the long term benefits of thin client, including improved availability, remain valid.

**Third Party Communications**

This is the element of the solution which is outsourced. In the past we have used a joint BT/Telewest solution to deliver the necessary levels of security. This has been a source of problems in the past and has contributed to down-time for Councillors. On occasion, this has been due to both parties being unwilling to accept responsibility for problems which added to the resolution times. The implementation of our secure remote access system has allowed us to review this situation and we have now opted for a wholly BT provided solution which should eliminate the uncertainty around responsibility. The solution also provides us with an element of self-service fault finding which may prove useful.

**The ICT Support Service**

The final element of the service is the support provided by ICT Services to Members when they experience problems. Currently the service is provided from 08:45am to 5:00pm. Cover beyond these times is on a best endeavours approach. This clearly does not cover the weekend period. Members will be aware that, in order to better understand their views, I carried out a simple survey on the impact of no out of hours cover. At the time of writing this report I had received the following replies;

15 replies received	
Not a problem	53%
Manageable	47%
A real problem	0%

I will provide Members with an update to these figures at the meeting.

**INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE**

- 7. The Council’s corporate computing environment is a complex series of systems that are increasingly integrated and interdependent. As with all ICT systems and supporting infrastructure, regular maintenance is essential to ensure major failures are avoided. As the working day is extended, the opportunity to carry out routine maintenance at that time is reduced and it is necessary for work to be carried out at weekends. These occasions are kept to a minimum but they will, nevertheless, occur regularly. As mentioned previously, during system design, we are mindful of minimising the impact of faults and maintenance through the use of features such as dual power supplies and disc-drives that can be exchanged without powering equipment off.

**RECENT DOWNTIME**

- 8. Members will be aware that during recent weeks we have experienced two significant events that have resulted in out of hours system downtime. There is a perception that these were due to the thin client implementation but this is incorrect.

**Air conditioning failure**

As a result of an air-conditioning failure, services were lost during a weekend. A system reset allowed a resumption of services. We are currently investigating whether our monitoring system can send SMS messages warning of increasing temperature allowing us to intervene prior to a loss of service.

**Infrastructure maintenance**

As mentioned previously, this was unavoidable and will be repeated in the future. We will give Members notice of all maintenance where possible but urgent problems may require action at short notice.

**CONCLUSION**

- 9. In conclusion, I would assure Members that maximising system availability is a central to the design of our systems. It has added complexity to our thin client implementation but this is justified by the availability improvements that will result. I would stress that the recent downtime encountered was not a result of the thin client project and would have affected the ‘old’ laptops in the same way.

In terms of the support service, the results of the survey indicate there is no justification to extend the present support arrangements outside of normal working hours.

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

- 10. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Corporate Directors’ comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		No significant implications in this area	X

TIM MURPHY  
CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ICT)

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Tim Murphy	5455	20 August 2009	OSICTAvailabilityReportSep09

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